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D. T. WINSLETT
7736 Auburn Rd.
Citrus Heights, Calif.

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and
A Happy New Year
TO ALL
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—Crop and Market—

by M. G. Dadant

If we are to consider spring prospects in the light of those of late fall, then we should look through rosy glasses. In many years there has rarely been a season when all conditions looked better than they do at present.

New England has not entirely suffered from the drought for nothing, but still more moisture is needed, and at this writing it looks as if snows will fill the bill. There is some complaint of lack of moisture in parts of Florida, eastern Montana, Idaho, the Prairie Provinces of Canada, and in some parts of Oklahoma and New Mexico and Arizona.

On the whole, colonies have gone into winter with a good food supply, thanks to enough fall flowers yielding to fill brood chambers, though surpluses were not up to expectations. Earlier moisture has revived the honey plants, even in the stricken East, and in the Plains States, and the little Dutch white clover in the Central Areas and in the East seems to give hopes of prospects for 1958, providing there is still the nutrients in the soil from which to get a nectar yield.

In fact we might say that prospects do look very good.

Honey Selling

Most reporters seem to be agreed that in a retail way, honey is selling about as usual, with a general pickup with the cold weather. In fact in the Southeast, most of the bulk comb honey appears to have moved though much of it moved to other markets. It is hoped that the supply of this product will all be in the hands of the retail grocer or the consumer by mid-January. Too bad, in one way, as this loses an opportunity of keeping a market steadily supplied throughout the year.

Yes, retail sales are satisfactory, in the minds of reporters at least, in the whole area east of the Mississippi River, with not much complaint farther west; as concerns retail demand.

There has been some unfortunate cutting in the bulk-comb area which seems to have been wholly unnecessary, and has disturbed the smaller packers who have built up an excellent reputation for taking care of their customers with a superior product throughout the years.

Jobbing Prices

Here we find a wide variety of prices from different reporters. On the whole there has been little if any drop from 1956-57 prices throughout the East and most of the South. Such sales as have been made are around the 14 cent figure for white and 2 cents less for amber. In fact there are quite a few lots which have moved at even a 15 cent figure for good white honey. And amber in the South seems to be holding up pretty well, and the markets seem to be absorbing it. Farther west, offers have been around the 13- 13½ cent level with some offers being made a cent or two lower.

Packer and Buyer Demand

It all resolves itself on how badly the producer is wanting to sell. There seems to be a great apathy on the part of the buyer to buy. In other words, not a settled price where competition has reached some sort of a medial point. Where honey is needed the prices have been paid. But a lack of activity up till the past ten days is evident.

Honey Wanted—Cars and less than car. Top Prices.
C. W. Aeppler Co., Oconomowoc, Wis.

Yet much of the white honey in California has been picked up. Plenty of the amber yet to leave the producers' hands. And with a growing population and real activity on the part of the western beekeepers in a selling campaign, they should easily be able to move all their under-par production, and soon be looking farther east for fresh supplies, especially of fine white honey.

Foreign Demand

Likely much of the stoic inactivity in buying up to now can be laid, first, to the strong desire on the part of the producer to want prices equal to a year ago, and, secondly, to the slowness with which the foreign demand has developed. A buzzing hint that Germany would need huge amounts of honey, and that the whole European picture looked especially good for American honey, has not as yet materialized, though just recently there seems to be activity in that direction. There is also the report that some of our markets are going to Central and South American suppliers, or that the European importers are waiting to see what the above countries are just now producing in the start of their new crop season.

All in all, bees, plants and moisture are excellent for this time of year. Honey moving well in retail way, producers reluctant to let their crop go at anything less than a year ago, and packers and buyers on the fence, waiting to see just what will develop, and likely hoping for the hoped-for foreign demand which would probably establish a buying price which would serve all domestic buyers as well as producers.

Not likely that support prices are having much to do with decisions.